

An "Authentic Pedagogy" for Teaching for Change in Sport Management

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We are living in postindustrial times (Lyotard, 1984). In these contemporary times, a multitude of change forces are influencing society and our institutions, including educational institutions (Berry, 1998; Gough, 1997; Wilson, 1997). The forces are challenging higher education leaders to prepare for a new environment (Fullan, 1999; Jencks, 1992; Levin & Riffel, 1997; Rader & Rader, 1998). To meet the challenge of changing times, a body of evidence is emerging that supports changing instructor practice (Kapitzke, 2000; Hord, 1997; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996). According to Fullan (1999), educators need to develop "the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices" (p. 44). Sport Management educators are not exempt from the need to adapt to the times with new teaching practices.

In response to the changing times in Sport Management education, an innovative pedagogical strategy was designed. The strategy involved the infusion of characteristics from theories of change (Mallen, 2003). An example of the infusion process includes selecting a characteristic from a contemporary theory. In this example the characteristic is from complexity theory and includes that the environment is pivotal (Doherty & Delener, 2001). A stable state is not achievable because the "world [was] primarily made of dissipative structures" (Keirse, 2003, p. 4). Therefore, one can not expect to work in a state of "equilibrium" (Keirse, p. 4). This characteristic is infused within the structure of a Sport Management written assignment to emulate the characteristic within the classroom. In this case the structure of the written assignment is adapted to include small groups (of 4 members) and multiple progressive drafts. After each draft has been completed, two group members are removed from the group and replaced with other members. Each progressive draft is completed after a change in the group partnerships. Therefore, the assignment is completed under conditions of change that must be managed, and not in a state of equilibrium. This pedagogy encourages Sport Management students to learn to manage change.

The purpose of this inquiry was to determine if the pedagogical strategy met the criteria for an "authentic pedagogy" as established by Newmann, Secada, and Wehlage (1995). An "authentic pedagogy" was defined as an evolving process that encouraged achievements that are "significant, worthwhile, and meaningful" (Newmann et al., p. 1). Newmann et al. envisioned that "authentic pedagogy" met three specific criteria including the "construction of knowledge," "disciplined inquiry," and "value beyond school" (p. 3). Within each of the three criteria for authentic pedagogy, Newmann et al. established classroom instructional standards and assessment standards. The methodology included a case study approach with 122 Sport Management students, the instructor, and 2 teaching assistants engaging in a written assignment pedagogically framed with change.

Data collection included a guided record method of written opinion and a collaborative meeting method. The guided record method of written opinion was designed to include a series of questions framed with the four dimensions of reflection outlined by Bain, Ballantyne, Packer, and Mills (1997). Patton (2002) supported the use of central questions as a constructivist method that aids to explicate participant perceptions. A collaborative meeting method was used to collect data from the instructor and teaching assistants after each of the 3-phases of the assignment. The collaborative meetings were conducted using a team model format that allowed members to participate on an equal basis (Fishbaugh, 1997). The collaborative meeting method offered a format for learning through discussion on multiple perspectives and options (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1998). The collaborative meeting discourse was audiotape recorded and then transcribed into text for analysis.

Data analysis established for the guided record and the collaborative discourse text utilized a constructivist methodology for discovered meaning (Klein & Turex, 1996). The constructivist methodology encouraged "interpretive understandings, or meaning with special attention to [the] context and original purpose" (Patton, 2002, p. 114). The data analysis strategy involved both deductive and inductive approaches with the themes established by the criteria for authentic pedagogy by Newmann et al. (1995).

After careful analysis, the results indicated that the pedagogical strategy was an "authentic pedagogy" with a high level of compliance with the criteria established by Newmann et al. The results indicated the practical implication of this pedagogical strategy as an 'authentic' pedagogical option for adapting Sport Management educational practice to teach for contemporary change.